



**TESTIMONY OF CORNELIUS FERREIRA, MD  
PRIMARY CARE/NUVANCE HEALTH  
SUBMITTED TO THE  
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE  
Wednesday, February 19, 2020**

**HB 5044, AN ACT CONCERNING IMMUNIZATIONS**

**NUVANCE HEALTH** appreciates this opportunity to submit written testimony in support of **HB 5044, AN ACT CONCERNING IMMUNIZATIONS**.

**NUVANCE HEALTH** strives to improve the health of residents in our communities- whether it is partnering with community-based organizations to address social determinants of health, treating a loved one at 2:00 a.m. in the Emergency Department, or employing science-based best practices for infectious disease control.

As a longtime primary care physician, I see the toll preventable illness takes on patients and their families. As a physician working within the Nuvance Health family of providers and hospitals, our mission is to improve the health of each person and the communities we serve. One of the simplest ways to do so is to promote immunization for preventable disease.

Spanning the 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, vaccines are one of modern medicine's success stories. Immunizations have been embraced across the globe as a prevention strategy for illness, with more than 116 million children worldwide in 2018 immunized against illnesses like diphtheria, pertussis, and tetanus. Because of immunization efforts, the world is close to being polio free, with the U.S. being declared polio-free since 1979.

On a regular basis, scientists develop vaccines. Healthcare providers immunize millions of children, adults, and elderly every year to address various emerging diseases, like the annual variation in the strains of influenza. Currently, scientists around the world are working to develop a vaccine for the 2019 novel Coronavirus (2019 Covid-19), a deadly infectious disease currently declared a global health pandemic, which has claimed in excess of 1,000 lives, exceeding the death toll from the SARS outbreak 17 years ago. Without vaccines and robust immunization programs, health impairment and premature death would be the norm.